

LIZ WILSON: KARMARAMA

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

Well, thank you so much. That was a completely unique welcome. So, I am Liz Wilson, as you probably remember by now, and I'm here from Karmarama. I am a CEO of Karmarama, which is a creative agency in London. So, if any of you, who were worried that Karmarama is the local yoga centre popped in for estranged pre-break session, it's not. And if you are thinking, god the british army sounds like a million miles away from the organisation I am working with, my big bank, my big healthcare brand. Don't worry this is a story about bringing together creativity and digital and data, so hopefully something for everybody. So it's a great

piece of work to show how we did that. So I am going to tell you a little bit about Karmarama first, only enough to give you a bit of background on how this piece of work works. We were founded in 2000, we became part of the Accenture family in 2016, in fact part of Accenture Interactive, which is as you all know, I'm sure, the world's largest digital agency. We are 300 people and we have lots of different skills, capabilities, backgrounds. But the thing that holds us all together as a values based organisation is this idea. And it is, you know we are a creative agency, so we do love stories and ideas and this is the idea behind our business, it is in our name, it is in our brand, it is our culture, it is in how we go to work everyday. So, it all comes from doing the right thing. Karma-rama: what goes around comes around or good works for short.

So far, so kind of hippie yoga retreat, does it actually work and are we any good? Well we have won a few awards over the years and you can probably pick out on here some that you are familiar with, whether they are about creativity and craft or performance and

effectiveness. But in case you didn't spot it, this one's our favourite, I picked this out for a couple of reasons. We are a talent business in the creative industry, now we are all in talent businesses nowadays, aren't we? We are all in a war to get the very very best people. But actually in the creative industry it is kind of even more important, because the people and the ideas that they can have literally define the quality of our product, so we live or die by our employer brand. So, this is probably our proudest award ever. We have just been ranked the

8th best company to work for in the UK. So, you know sounds kind of easy as a creative agency, that sounds like a really cool place to work. Actually there is only two creative agencies in the top 100. So, we are super proud about that and it kind of informs a piece of work I want to share with you today.

So I said we have a range of talent in the business and there is kind of four kinds of talent that go to make up the piece of work that I want to show you. And so, first of all, there is some communications talent and these are classically brand people. People who understand

advertising and are going from brand outwards there is a group of people who work more in the performance and digital marketing space and those people who are going to go from customer back of from that middle bit of the funnel when somebody is interested in the product that hasn't yet tipped over to actually using. And then thirdly, we have our creative products and platforms business which is where a customer goes into actual experience of the product. And finally we have makers who are there to fulfill the vision of each of those three pillars. And knitting those three four things



together is where this piece of work comes from.

Let me give you the theory. Here is a big theory slide about connecting creativity. Now, one of the great sadnesses of being in business nowadays, or being a customer nowadays, is that our experience of a brand or product is exactly as siloed as the organisation that owns it.

You know we experience things in thin silos, in thin slices, where you can almost feel the battle on pass from team to team. So here's a way of looking at brands world.

On the right-hand side of a slide: culture. So this is the outside world, this is the domain of marketing. It's where we talk about things, where we give messages that are going to give the brand of the product a role in people's minds. On the left-hand side on the slide is the consumption where we are actually using and experiencing the products. So this is the product and experience world. This is where we are building up a role for the product or the brand in people's lives. Now, those two things tend to be kind of disconnected, you know.

Two slightly different cycles and where we think there's a real opportunity for brands. Where we feel we can really help to add value is in this middle, in this middle area. So bringing together a big deep insight and really granular understanding of behaviour to connect up the cultural, the outside saying world, and the inside doing well so they become one self reinforcing loop of experience. That's what we're trying to do.

So you will judge now how successful we were. Back to the British army. Now, when we start a few years ago, 3 years ago, the British army had a bit of a problem real, a shortfall in new recruits into the army. And it's a funny thing, but lots of reasons why that can happen, one of the most peculiar is, there isn't a war on. And when there is a war the army gets talked about a lot, it looks really purposeful and important and people want to join in. Similarly, over the last ten to twenty years the eyes got smaller and smaller and smaller. So, the likelihood that you know somebody in the army, you have had a direct personal experience of a family member or a friend in the army lower and lower and lower. So, the army isn't really at the front of people's minds, so they are missing out on a lot of talent and they needed to attract a

much broader, much more diverse audience. But the problem is, they're not on the radar of that audience. They've always been a very very prestigious advertiser in the UK, interestingly. They, you know big beautiful glossy

advertising, broadcast advertising, in television advertising in particular. And typically if you visualise what you think that might look like in your heads, you are probably going to get to exactly the right kind of work: guns, tanks, macho men striding across the desert on a big adventure. And this works brilliant up to a point. What it really does well is it attracts people who already know they want to be in the army. You are kind of going to get them for free anyway, so what can you do to open your arms to a much broader group and welcome in the many different skills across the UK population but also cater to their very different mindsets and needs.

Back to the theory, we talk to lots and lots of soldiers, every rank, every creed, colour, profile, life stage and one of the things that came through again and again and again was the main

emotional driver for wanting to be in the army was about belonging to something bigger than yourself. Was not about adventure, was not about fitness, was not even about jumping out of

helicopters. It was about belonging, being part of something. And so, we were able to take this out into culture giving people a stronger sense of how they might belong and then into consumption, into the actual recruitment process, which is a pretty much a 9 month process

from when you are leaving school to being in the army. To help different people and they different journey, decision-making journeys, ever going to be going.

So, this is where the story starts. Let me show you how it came to life in the real world.

Video 1:

So it's a truly data first approach to tackling the whole problem. Not just the communication part of the problem or the recruitment and application side of the problem and it's, you know,

it really is data first. It is not just that the data is used in how you target and reach difficult to reach groups of people. It is in the inside, it's in



the application data on which all of this was based. So, the saying and the doing match the outside messaging and the inside experience match up and it reflects the needs of all of the different profiles of people we are now talking to. And you can get a better sense that may be here where the imagery that we are using is all about teamwork, it is about kinship, it is about camaraderie, being part of something and doing something important and meaningful together.

And we have moved it on over the years until year two having laid some strong foundations about why people might want to be a part of the army. We now wanted to help to get some not so sures over the line so people who felt they might be a barrier to them belonging. So, I'd like to be a part of it but I'm not quite sure if it's a place for women. I'd like to be part of it but I'm not sure I can still be Muslim and be in the army. I'd like to be a part of it but I'm not that fit, is that going to be ok? And so, this is the work we have done more recently.

Video 2:

So again, what we're bringing together there is some very provocative broadcast advertising that kind of walks into an argument with the traditionalists who think you should be a nice macho though guy, doesn't show their feelings in the army, you know, the army should have a very, you know, should be very stereotypical. And so, we decided that what we would do is, caught a little bit of that controversy and what we are able to do is create a lot of energy around the conversation by going almost going up against some of the traditionalists and positioning the army against that world. And we put the army into the middle of the conversation, of the cultural conversation, in the outside world, so what we have got here is a lot more energy behind the campaign and a lot more a lot more media dollars, frankly, than we could have afforded in a budget. So, this is really stretching the campaign, taking it out to where people are and putting it on the sofas of breakfast television many new shows. Phase 3, we have continued to challenge the traditionalists and we kind of got one step

further. This is about, this phase, now is layering in again to what happens when you belong, you are doing something that matters and the truth in the UK in the moment is, there is not particularly a shortage of jobs for young people, but certainly there is a shortage of jobs where young people feel are meaningful, have a purpose, and make them literally want to skip to work every morning feeling like what they're doing actually matters. And so this is a phase of the campaign where we are welcoming in even more people by saying there is a place for everybody to belong in the army and there is a place for everybody to do something that is important whatever the traditionalists, the media might say about young people. So, again. It is somewhat walking into the middle of that cultural battlefield.

Video 3:

So, it is about the army recognising the value of young people and recognising their need for a job with purpose and it helped us to recognise something. It helped us to recognise there is a way to go beyond having a company purpose or brand purpose to having an inner purpose which is able to connect up everything that the company says and everything it does. So that the promise and the fulfillment actually knit together perfectly and seamlessly. And we found that this is a great way to drive transformation and a change from it, from the Inside out. So having an inner purpose is helping us on all kinds of talents issues from attracting the very best to making them aspire and want to give more than they normally would in a transactional relationship and helping them achieve. And being the difference between a vision statement and an actual transformation and a company.

So, that is the story of the army. Thank you very much for your attention, I hope it sparked a few ideas that you might want to take into your everyday life.

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